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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

SECRET

February 14, 1964

NATIONAL SECURITY ACTION MEMORANDUM NO. 280

MEMORANDUM TO:

THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE  
THE ADMINISTRATOR, AID

I have today determined that it is essential to establish in Washington a small committee for the management of U. S. policy and operations in South Vietnam. After consultation with the Secretary of State, I have designated Mr. William Sullivan of the Department of State to serve as Chairman of this committee, under the direct supervision of the Secretary of State.

I now request that the Secretary of Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence, and the Administrator of the Agency for International Development nominate to me individuals from their departments and agencies to serve as members of Mr. Sullivan's committee. The officers so nominated will be expected to give an absolute priority to their obligations as members of this committee and as agents for the execution of approved decisions. On this basis, I have already designated Mr. Michael Forrestal to serve as the White House representative on this committee.

Major questions of policy and operations will be subject to my approval in consultation with heads of departments and agencies as appropriate. In the execution of approved policy, it is my desire that Mr. Sullivan's committee shall move energetically, and that department appeal from Mr. Sullivan's decisions shall be kept at a minimum. He is being appointed because

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he commands the confidence not only of myself and of the Secretary of State, but also of senior officials of all agencies concerned.

It is my hope and expectation that the establishment of this committee will permit an energetic, unified and skillful prosecution of the only war we face at present.

*Dwight D. Eisenhower*

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